2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

"Again I agree with you," I said, "but the Press is not easy to restrain, and control would cause an uproar and questions in the House of Commons."

"My friend, we are not in London. London and the United Kingdom are quite different from Aden and Arabia. Some of your Members of Parliament are very ignorant about conditions in the Colonies. They should be taught. Your country has reached its present stage of development after a thousand years and for most of that time your Press, when there was one, was controlled and not allowed to mislead the people. We are changing much more rapidly than you did and are trying to do in months what has taken you centuries. I say that you must not allow the newspapers to mislead the people. It's dangerous and your Parliament must be made to understand."

The old gentleman spoke with much feeling, but I am afraid little understanding of conditions in the United Kingdom. Our Saturday evening *tête-à-tête* parties became a custom.

I learnt much from my wise old friend.

Some ten years before this particular conversation, I was in Riyadh on a visit from Kuwait to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the great Ibn Saud. I was accorded a private audience and found myself alone with the great man, who once he was satisfied that I was not the bearer of some tiresome message from my Government relaxed and talked of Arabia and the Arabs. He asked me if I knew how to deal with Arabs, and I said I knew a little about the matter but that I should be very grateful for his advice. I got it for half an hour and every time I allowed my eyes to stray from his face he tapped me on the knee and said: "Listen."

I listened and learnt. Briefly the advice amounted to this; be strong, when you are strong then you can be just and when your strength is overwhelming you can afford to be generous, but first and foremost it is strength which is of paramount importance. Diplomacy should be used to undermine the enemy's strength. Ibn Saud was certainly a successful exponent of his own doctrine. It was wise advice which I was, in later years, to follow to the best of my ability.

The plan for the political development of the Colony was

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2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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178 to ensure ordered conditions in the Colony by a firm Govern-
666 ment policy while political changes were taking place, and at first to concentrate on the municipal field as a training ground for young men who were sufficiently public spirited to want to play their part in public affairs. The practice was introduced of nominating younger men to the Township Authorities, and in March 1953 the constitution of the Aden Township Authority was changed to allow for three of the members to be elected from the Township area and from April 1st of that year it was restored to the status of a municipality. Thus Aden came to have its first elections.

665 Careful thought was given to the qualifications of both
666 candidates and electors. There were plenty of people in the Colony who could qualify as candidates, but it was essential to encourage really good men to come forward, and this was done, with the result that the elections were a success from every point of view. They were well conducted and orderly, and resulted in three good men, all Arabs, being returned. Two years later the number of elected members was doubled.

641 A word about the electorate. It was essential in a place as politically immature as Aden that the franchise, while being reasonably wide, should not be too wide and certainly not universal. Only a small proportion of the population had ever voted before and they were all from overseas, either the United Kingdom or India. There were many Yemenis in the town, many of whom had a residential qualification, but comparatively few of whom were other than unskilled labourers, with no idea of the value of a vote and little real interest in Aden other than as a temporary home in which to make sufficient money to support their families in the Yemen. Property or income qualification was, therefore, insisted upon before a name could be inscribed on the electoral roll and in addition, residential qualifications for electors who were not Aden born.

Nothing would have been more ill-advised than to have given the ultimate power to people quite unfit to exercise it, who were easily swayed by political demagogues capable of passionate but irresponsible speech. The electoral net, therefore,

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

was spread with care. Later, when more understanding had come to the people and they were politically more mature, it could be spread wider by a relaxation of some of the qualifications. In practice, when some years later it was necessary to consider again the qualifications of electors when the electoral principle was introduced for the selection of some of the members of the Legislative Council, it was found that the rise in wage rates had so broadened the field that no relaxation was desirable. The day will undoubtedly come when there will be adult suffrage, but I think that that is still some way away, especially so in the case of women who are only just emerging from the cocoon of purdah.

It seemed obvious to us, even in those early days, that there should be a common electoral roll both for the Municipal and later the Legislative Council elections. No-one ever thought of having a communal roll, and I was surprised to learn that there were such things in other Colonies when I was congratulated one day by a visiting Member of Parliament on our good sense. I am afraid there was little cause for congratulation; it was abysmal ignorance combined with common sense.

The only time that any question of communal candidates was raised was in 1955 in connection with the Legislative Council elections, when it was proposed from an unofficial source that the minority communities should be given representation on the Council, not by nomination, but by the election of candidates from those communities by the electorate as a whole. This would clearly not have been in the interests of the minority communities because the candidate who made the most appeal to the majority community, the Arabs, would have won the seat and he might not have had the confidence of his community or been inclined to represent their interests when they conflicted with those of the majority of his supporters. For this very sufficient reason the proposal was not pursued.

During the first three years of my term of office changes were made in the nominated Unofficial membership of the Legislative Council. Some of the older members who had given sterling service, but who had got somewhat out-of-date, were not re-nominated when their term of office expired. They

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

From the "Upper Circle" 1958

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the Attorney General, the Financial Secretary and one other Government official and six members to be nominated by the Governor in his absolute discretion. The Governor will no longer preside over the Council, his place being taken, as is only appropriate, by a Speaker.

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The qualifications for electors and for candidates for election are to remain unchanged. This means that there will be no extension of the franchise and no relaxation of the rule which requires a candidate to be Aden born, or if not Aden born, to be a British subject or a British Protected person who has resided in the Colony for seven out of the last ten years. A very wise decision. Nothing could have been more foolhardy than to have extended the franchise at the present time beyond its already wide limits. To allow foreign subjects to be elected as Members of a Legislative Council would be unconstitutional in any country.

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With the grant of an unofficial elected majority it is proposed to appoint five Unofficial Members of whom three must be elected Members to take charge of the Departments of Education, Public Works, Communications, Labour and Social Welfare and the Health Department. They will be known as Members-in-Charge and will be responsible for their respective Departments. Early in 1956 I introduced the practice of associating individual Unofficial Members with Departments of Government with the object of preparing them for just this sort of development. The result is that the present Unofficial Members have gained valuable experience and one can only hope that the electorate, always a trifle capricious even in England, will have the good sense to return at least some of them to the Council at the next election where their experience will be of benefit to the Colony.

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The new Constitution will, of course, provide that the Governor shall exercise reserve executive and legislative powers. This is a normal procedure and essential, particularly in a politically juvenile Colony such as is Aden which has had a Legislative Council for only eleven years.

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The contemplated change in the composition of the Executive Council is as sweeping as that in the Legislative Council.

7: Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1949-50) 1951 MM1 Aden
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ADEN COLONY

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Aden Colony also includes Perim Island which is administered by an Administrator who is also the Commissioner of Police, Aden. The population of the island is 381. The majority of the islanders are fishermen, and dried fish is exported to Aden. In the past there has been pearl fishing, but this year no pearl fishing contract was taken. There is a small police detachment in the island together with medical and lighthouse staff.

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Up to the end of 1948, Cable & Wireless Ltd. maintained communication with Perim by marine cable. The cable became unserviceable in 1948, and it was decided not to repair it. It is likely that communication will soon be established by wireless. A R.A.F. airplane makes a flight to the island once weekly and carries mail and passengers from Aden.

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The Governor of the Colony is also Governor of the Aden Protectorate, which is not administered by the Colony Government. There is no one Government for the Aden Protectorate; various Rulers and Chiefs are in protective treaty relations with His Majesty's Government. In each of the Western and Eastern Protectorates the Governor is represented by a British Agent.

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The Protectorate includes the island of Socotra.

The administration of justice within the Colony is entrusted to the Supreme Court, a Court of Small Causes for certain specified civil cases and Magistrates' Courts for criminal cases. The law of the Protectorate is largely tribal custom, but in certain chiefdoms the Shari' a code of Muslim law is recognised, especially in the Qu'aiti State of Shihr and Mukalla (ruled by His Highness Sultan Sir Salih bin Ghalib al Qu'aiti K.C.M.G.), which State legislates by published decrees.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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There are two local government bodies in the Colony: the larger is known as the Fortress Township Authority and the area governed embraces the Isthmus and Peninsula with a civilian population estimated to be 70,000. This area includes the Military and the R.A.F. establishments. The other is known as Sheikh Othman Township Authority and takes its name from the built-up township of 21,000 persons, all non-Europeans, situated some four miles from the Isthmus. The area governed includes this Township and the remainder of the Colony in which are to be found four small coastal villages whose inhabitants number approximately 2,500.

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In 1949 the principle of election was first introduced into the constitution of the Fortress Township Authority, so as to provide three elected members in addition to the existing four nominated official and three nominated unofficial members. In Crater ward there were elections, resulting in the success of one Arab merchant and one Pakistani advocate who was previously a nominated member of the Authority. In the other ward objections were raised against two Arab candidates, who were found not to be of British birth, and a

7: Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1949-50) 1951 MMI Aden MMI

Parsee merchant was returned without a contest. The election in Crater passed off without incident. 666 642

The qualifications for a voter were British birth or Aden residence for over five years, and a property qualification (ownership of premises valued at Rs. 2,000 or payment of a rent of Rs. 25 a month). This was found to give a voters' roll of 1,660, and as this was considered too small an electorate for an estimated population of 70,000 in Fortress area, the qualifications were approximately halved by an amendment to the law in 1950, and now give an electorate of about 5,000. The present qualifications for a *voter* is Aden birth, or British birth and two years' residence, or foreign birth and five years' residence in Aden. In addition the voter must be a male, and own property worth Rs. 1,000 or pay rent of Rs. 12 a month, or have an income of Rs. 130 a month. 641 666

A *candidate* must be of Aden or British birth, and possess the qualifications of a voter.

In Sheikh Othman Township, with a population of some 25,000, the people are not so developed politically, and a fully nominated Authority is retained, with three officials and two Arab residents of Sheikh Othman as members. 632

The Township Authorities hold fortnightly meetings to superintend various services of a municipal character, such as the control of markets, the maintenance of public health and sanitary services, the maintenance and improvement of roads, the provision of recreation facilities for the Aden public and the control of building operations.

The Township Authorities are responsible, on behalf of the Government, for the collection of the following taxes : 632 651

House and Property Tax

Yield in 1949 .. Rs. 2,78,093.
Yield in 1950 .. Rs. 2,90,194

This tax is assessed in the Fortress at 8 per cent per annum of the rateable value and in Sheikh Othman (virtually a rural area) at 4½ per cent. Rateable value is arrived at by first estimating the gross value, which is the annual rent at which premises might reasonably be expected to let, assuming the owner undertakes to bear the cost of rates, repairs, insurance and any other expenses necessary to maintain the premises in a state to command that rent; from the gross value 10 per cent is deducted in lieu of repairs, insurance, etc., and the residue is known as the rateable value.

Sanitation Tax

Yield in 1949 .. Rs. 1,58,830
Yield in 1950 .. Rs. 1,65,477

This tax in the Fortress is assessed at 4½ per cent per annum on the rateable value and in Sheikh Othman at 2¼ per cent and is collected to compensate for the vast conservancy services rendered by the Public Health Department. In Aden where few sewers exist, the daily removal of the sullage water and human waste from thousands of houses not connected to main drainage is a considerable task.

8:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1951-52)1954 MM1 Aden MM1

Up to the end of 1948, Cable & Wireless Ltd. maintained communication with Perim by marine cable, which became unserviceable in that year, and it was decided not to repair it. A wireless set is maintained by the Police.

The Governor of the Colony is also Governor of the Aden Protectorate, which is not administered by the Colony Government. There is no one Government for the Aden Protectorate; various Rulers and Chiefs are in protective treaty relations with Her Majesty's Government. In both the Western and the Eastern Protectorates the Governor is represented by a British Agent.

The Protectorate includes the island of Socotra.

In addition under the provision of the Kamaran Order in Council, 1949, the Governor of the Colony is also Governor of Kamaran, a small island about 200 miles north of Perim on the eastern shore of the Red Sea. This island was formerly the site of a quarantine station but the station has been reduced to a care and maintenance basis.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are two local Government bodies in the Colony. The larger is known as Fortress Township Authority and the area governed embraces the Isthmus and Peninsula with a civilian population estimated to be 80,000 to 100,000. This area includes the Military and the R.A.F. establishments. The other is known as Sheikh Othman Township Authority and takes its name from the built-up township of 30,000 persons, nearly all non-Europeans, situated some four miles from the Isthmus. The area governed includes this township and the remainder of the Colony in which are to be found small coastal villages whose inhabitants number approximately 2,500.

The Fortress Township Authority now includes three elected members in addition to four nominated official and three nominated unofficial members. At the 1951 elections two Arabs and one Pakistani, who unfortunately died during the period of his service, were elected. At the by-election an Arab newspaper editor was elected. Both the general and the by-election passed off without incident.

The qualifications for a voter are Aden or British birth and two years' residence, or foreign birth and five years' residence. In addition a voter must be a male of over twenty-one years and own property worth *Sh.*1,500, or pay rent of *Sh.*18 a month, or have an income *Sh.*200 a month. A candidate must be of Aden or British birth and possess the qualifications of a voter. At the 1951 elections the electoral roll for the Fortress Township contained the names of 4,930 persons. In the Sheikh Othman Township Authority area the people are not so developed politically and a fully nominated Authority is retained with three officials, one Arab resident and one European resident as members.

The Township Authorities hold fortnightly meetings to superintend various services of a municipal character, such as control of markets, the maintenance of public health and sanitary services, the maintenance and improvement of roads, the provision of recreation facilities and the control of building operations.